



NEWS

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CHAMPION INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION EARNS CORPORATE WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP AWARD FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION EFFORTS

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt today presented the Champion International Corporation of Stamford, Connecticut, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Corporate Stewardship Award in recognition of the company's outstanding contributions to fish and wildlife conservation.

Champion's Chairman and Chief Executive Office Dick Olson accepted the award on behalf of the organization during a meeting with the Secretary in his office in Washington, DC.

"When I came to the Interior Department almost four years ago, I was determined to make the Endangered Species Act work for people and for the environment. I was convinced it was possible to practice good resource economics and sound conservation techniques," Babbitt said in presenting the award. "Champion International Corporation was among the first to provide practical solutions that allow us to enjoy a healthy environment while promoting economic growth.

"Wherever Champion has a presence, it has worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its counterpart state agencies to develop solutions that protect wildlife and allow land use. Champion has shown that we can use our lands while protecting our natural heritage," Babbitt concluded.

In accepting the award, Dick Olson said, "This award is testimony to the hard work of hundreds of Champion foresters and wildlife biologists. What is especially gratifying is that it recognizes Champion's comprehensive approach to protecting our forest resources as part of our ongoing sustainability and stewardship effort and our commitment to American Forest & Paper Association's Sustainable Forestry Initiative."

Champion has supported a range of activities designed to protect endangered and threatened species and their habitats over the past several years. The corporation's efforts include adopting specialized land management techniques that benefit birds and fish and educational programs for their employees and contractors.

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In 1994, Champion signed a cooperative agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the USDA Forest Service, and the State of Texas to advance restoration goals for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Under the agreement, Champion manages 2,000 acres of its Brushy Creek Wildlife Management Area in east Texas to protect existing woodpecker colonies and to provide additional nesting habitat for transplanted woodpeckers. The corporation has also built and installed artificial nesting cavities, conducted prescribed burns, and established open stands of longleaf pine to benefit the woodpecker.

In its role as one of Maine's major forest landowners, Champion helped establish the Salmon Habitat and River Enhancement, or SHARE, Project. SHARE has become a focal point in developing cooperative solutions to conserving Atlantic salmon. As part of this effort, Champion contributed funds, personnel, and equipment to map salmon habitat, clear obstacles to spawning, repair water control structures, and build and tend weirs to track returning fish.

Champion has also worked with the Service to arrange or fund endangered species training for its contract loggers. It produced an illustrated guidebook to endangered species in Alabama. The corporation also developed a series of educational video tapes about endangered species in the South. Because of the success of these ongoing efforts, Champion is developing endangered species guidebooks for each of the 17 states in which it operates.

Champion is the eighth company to receive the Service's Corporate Wildlife Stewardship Award since it was created in 1990.